

### **Lutheran pastor ordained**

The ordination of Rev. Rudolf Goethe, former Lutheran Evangelical pastor, by Catholic Bishop Albert Stohr of Mainz, Germany, on December 22 has naturally attracted a good deal of attention because Father Goethe, aged seventy, was given permission to continue in the married state. About twenty Dutch ministers, also converts from Lutheranism, are said to be seeking similar dispensations from canon law. The Holy Father has made it clear that he will reserve each case for his own personal decision. Catholics of the Latin (Western) rite take celibacy among their priests for granted, although they know that the Church has always permitted the ordination of married candidates for the priesthood in the Eastern rites. The ordination of married men was more or less usual in the early Church as a whole. St. Paul, it is true, proposed the ideal of celibacy and virginity for all men and women who were called to devote their entire lives to God (I Cor. 7:7-8, 32-35), but even he did not insist on celibacy in the selection of deacons and bishops (I Tim. 3: 1-10). Local councils in the West began to lay down the canonical requirement of celibacy at the beginning of the fourth century, in a somewhat intermittent and irregular way. Even in the West the rule did not become universal until the First Lateran Council (A.D. 1123). Pope Pius XI in his encyclical on the priesthood (1935) said that canon law had made obligatory "what might in any case be termed a moral exigency that springs from the gospel and apostolic preaching."

### **... married priests in the U. S.**

For over a half-century there have been Catholic married priests of the Ukrainian rite in the United States. The movement towards priestly celibacy among Eastern-rite Catholics here was slowed when Pius XII asked their hierarchy to find places for scores of married priests from DP camps in Europe in American Ukrainian parishes. Since celibacy is a matter of ecclesiastical discipline rather than of absolute divine law, the Holy Father has to consider the religious welfare of souls (e.g., in Orthodox and even in Protestant parishes) as well as the long-standing ideal and "moral exigency" in making delicate decisions relating to it.

### **Light for Europe by Candlemas?**

Are the NATO planners being overly optimistic again? They set up the Roman meeting of the Foreign, Defense and Finance Ministers of the twelve Atlantic Treaty nations for last November 24 with the announcement that major economic and military decisions would be taken there. When the North Atlantic Council abruptly adjourned after four days of formalities, it not only disappointed its Italian hosts but dashed the great expectations it had widely aroused in Europe. Reasons for the adjournment: the Harriman economic report was unfinished; serious political difficulties had bogged down the European Army plan. Now another full-dress meeting of the Council

## **CURRENT COMMENT**

is scheduled for February 2 at Lisbon. We are being told that by then agreements will have been reached on three immensely complicated problems: a Big Three "contractual agreement" with Western Germany to replace the occupation statute; an agreement on a European Army commingling the forces of six nations; an economic agreement based on the report of the Temporary Council Committee headed by Mr. Harriman. We would be pleasantly surprised if agreement on even *one* of these measures could be reached within the month. We would consider a three-base hit as almost a miracle of statesmanship. Besides the general political agreement outlining the sovereign rights of the West German state, eighty pages of subsidiary contracts remain to be negotiated. The Germans are questioning the financial aspects of the European Army plan. The Belgians have raised fundamental political objections against it, as well as vigorous financial objections against the Harriman report. The major proposal that the European nations increase productivity 14 per cent a year for the next three years is opposed by most of them. It might be the part of wisdom to postpone the Lisbon meeting for a month or so.

### **Italian treaty revised**

Back in 1945, the newly organized Council of Foreign Ministers took up the treaty of peace with Italy first because, as ex-Secretary of State James F. Byrnes says in his autobiography, "it was the least controversial." The treaty that was finally written has been, thanks at least in part to Mr. Byrne's yielding to Molotov's demands, the most controversial since Versailles. The Italians have been particularly bitter about the preamble, in which Italy was branded an aggressor, and the disarmament clauses, which left her at the mercy of Tito. Ever since Italy was admitted into the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, the stringent military restrictions have been nonsensical. Her case for revision of the preamble was substantially strengthened when the treaty with Japan did not stigmatize the Japanese for their much more flagrant aggression. The U. S. Senate had voted on April 2 last in favor of eliminating the military clauses, and on September 28 the Foreign Ministers of the Big Three declared for general revision. The treaty itself provides no procedures for revision except of the military sections.

These might be changed either by agreement with the "Allied and associated powers" or, if Italy was a member of the United Nations, by agreement between Italy and the Security Council. Since the Soviets have persisted in their baseless blackballing of Italy, the latter took the novel step on December 8 of asking her twenty-two former enemies to waive all the protested provisions of the treaty. The United States agreed on December 22, and all the treaty signatories except Russia, Czechoslovakia, Poland and Albania are expected to concur. Premier De Gasperi deserves sincere congratulations on the success of Italy's long struggle to redeem herself.

### **Housing boom still on**

The demand for housing being what it is, the defense mobilizers are having a rough time keeping the building industry within bounds. For 1951 the Government set a goal of 800,000 to 850,000 houses. After defense industries got their share of scarce materials, especially of steel and copper, there wasn't supposed to be enough left over to keep builders going at anything like their mad 1950 pace. To make sure that the industry behaved, the Administration tightened mortgage loans and raised down payments. The result? By the end of October builders had started 900,000 houses. When the final figures are in, the total will be comfortably over a million. That will make 1951 the second best housing year in the postwar period, only a few hundred thousand short of the 1950 all-time record of 1.4 million. The Government has hopes that 1952 will tell a different story. Again it is aiming at 800,000 to 850,000 houses, and again many builders, though worried over the supply of mortgage money, are figuring on another million-home year. Oddly enough, according to a recent *Business Week* survey, they don't seem very worried over a predicted materials shortage. Maybe they figure that with an election due in November Washington won't be too tough on housing. They may be overlooking a growing sentiment in Congress to stop babying civilians and get on with rearming. The November report of Senator Lyndon Johnson's Preparedness subcommittee was sharply critical of the lag in defense production. Should

junketing Congressmen return with a new sense of urgency, communicated by our military leaders abroad, builders may discover that they can't gain relief from shortages by crying on the shoulders of politicians.

### **Prudent shoppers**

Should any of your friends happen to be merchants, be especially kind to them these days. The joy in the hearts of holiday shoppers found only a tiny echo this year in their hearts. After a sluggish November, Christmas buying started so slowly that many department stores were forced to stage December sales. For the nation as a whole, department store sales for the four weeks ending December 15 were up only one per cent over 1950. That meant that only a last-minute rush of mob proportions could push the merchants over the hump. The usual rush did develop, but nowhere were the police called in to keep order. With only a single shopping day left before Christmas, figures indicated that 1951 sales would do no more than equal last year's. Since prices are up anywhere from 5 to 8 per cent, volume (unit sales) actually dropped below 1950. About the poor showing in some sections there was no mystery. With reconversion unemployment running as high as 7 per cent in the auto industry, Detroit merchants could scarcely hope to set any records. But how about places like St. Louis, Chicago and New York? The retail trade offered a number of explanations for the disappointing season. Higher food prices were mentioned, as well as higher taxes. Some merchants noted that a lot of people had stocked up on liquor to beat the hike in the excise tax. Others pointed out that there was little scare buying this year. Whatever the explanation, it was obvious that housewives were continuing to keep a tight button on the family pocketbook. That was bad news to the merchants, but very good news to the stabilizers in Washington. It suggests that for another six months at least, despite mounting Government outlays, prices will continue to move within a narrow range.

### **Negro's right to play golf**

In a decision that should win the approval of every golfer, Chief Judge Joseph C. Hutcheson Jr. of the U. S. Court of Appeals in New Orleans ruled on December 20 that the city of Houston, Texas, could not legally exclude a person from its municipal golf course merely on the ground of color. In making his ruling Judge Hutcheson reversed the decision of a U. S. District Judge who had allowed the city fathers of Houston to get away with the contention that a segregated public park *without* a golf course (such as Houston Negroes have) is "substantially equal" to one *with* a golf course (such as Houston whites have). The fallacy of this contention will be obvious to anyone who ever took a divot. Judge Hutcheson's decision means that the city of Houston will either have to build a separate golf course for Negroes or allow Negroes to use the present one. That the city may

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choose the latter course seems not improbable in the light of a report in *Newsweek* for December 17 by associate editor Ralph de Toledano. He finds that the South's "touchy provincialism, its racist mores and its backward economy are disappearing or have already disappeared." Catalysts of this change have been the millions of GI's trained in the South, the influx of Northern money and industry, Federal expenditures and the atomic-energy projects. Mr. de Toledano finds a "relaxed attitude" among politicians, civic leaders and businessmen. "Jim Crow laws may remain on the books for a long time to come, but progressively they are being honored in the breach."

### ... another step forward

All this is cheering news, since every instance of Negroes taking their place normally beside whites in the enjoyment of the American way of life has an educative value. Many people keep saying that segregation must remain in force until Negroes "are ready" to be fully integrated into American society. They must all face the fact that Negroes can "get ready" only by sharing the social experiences that help make Americans what they are.

### Question for Mr. Stokes

Richard L. Stokes, whose column appears in some Catholic weeklies, made a statement in the *Catholic Mirror* for November which should have caused us to raise our eyebrows much sooner than this. (The *Mirror* is the diocesan monthly magazine of Springfield, Mass.) Mr. Stokes expressed great alarm over the authority of Congress to cite for contempt recalcitrant witnesses before congressional investigating committees. He said: "'contempt of Congress,' which in the judgment of legal scholars is a nonexistent and mythical offense." The scope of this power, i.e., the kind of question a witness must answer in order to avoid being cited, is certainly a legitimate subject of discussion among "legal scholars," though even here the courts have so far not left much room for doubt about the amplitude of the power Congress enjoys. But the existence of the power has been recognized by the Federal judiciary for exactly one hundred and thirty years, ever since 1821. The law defining contempt of Congress as a statutory defense dates back to 1857. Only once since that time has the Supreme Court failed to uphold congressional use of the power to cite for contempt, and that exception has lain fallow for seventy years. Mr. Stokes is now objecting to the existence of the power, at this late date, because rightists he admires have been cited and convicted in court. It would be interesting to know 1) whether he objected when leftists were being cited, as many of them have been; and 2) who the "legal scholars" are in whose "judgment" contempt of Congress is a "nonexistent and mythical offense." To our knowledge, no reputable constitutionalist has questioned the existence of a power recognized by the courts for over a century and a quarter.

## HEMISPHERE SECURITY

On December 13, almost unnoticed in the press, the Organization of the American States began its formal and legal existence. The ratification by the Republic of Colombia of the Bogotá Charter, drafted in that city in 1948, completed the fourteen approvals by hemisphere states required for its enactment.

The present action does not initiate the organization because it has already been in operation provisionally, on the basis of agreements which have been developed since the idea of western hemisphere cooperation began to have serious meaning in the 'thirties. Through its representative council, convening in Washington, the Inter-American Conferences held every five years, the interim meetings of Foreign Ministers of the western hemisphere and a host of subsidiary councils and specialized organizations, the OAS already has an impressive record as a regional organization operating under Article 51 of the UN Charter.

The most important function of the OAS is the maintenance of peace in the hemisphere. Teeth have been provided by the 1947 Treaty of Reciprocal Assistance, which sets up machinery for action against aggression upon an American state. Since there is no provision for a veto, the OAS cannot be paralyzed like the UN by the will of one Power, large or small, in acting speedily to avert a threat to peace either from inside or outside the hemisphere.

In two instances since 1948, both involving Caribbean countries, the peace machinery has been invoked to prevent what might have resulted in serious trouble. In each case where aggression was charged, an on-the-spot investigation determined the facts and the Council took prompt and effective action.

Out of these actions in the Caribbean (which involved the Dominican Republic, one of the hemisphere's most notorious dictatorships) has arisen a most perplexing problem. The OAS Charter and, indeed, the whole inter-American system, is based on the absolute juridical equality of the member states. Interference by one country in the internal affairs of another, even to secure relief from a dictator, is definitely outlawed. Collective action for such purposes has never been seriously considered. On the other hand, the Charter specifies that the basis of cooperation in the hemisphere rests on "the effective exercise of representative democracy" (Article 5). Moreover, the American Declaration of the Rights and Duties of Man says hopefully that "every person having legal capacity is entitled to participate in the government of his country, directly or through his representatives, and to take part in popular elections, which shall be by secret ballot, and shall be honest, periodic and free." The question is, then, will the peace structure become a prop of dictators and a means for these men to perpetuate themselves in power? The right to interfere cannot rest upon the will of individual states. Perhaps collective machinery can one day be worked out whereby the principles of the Charter may be made effective.

PAUL S. LIETZ



## WASHINGTON FRONT

As this appears, the Senators and Representatives will be assembling in Washington to begin the second session of the 82nd Congress. It goes without saying that with the party conventions coming along in July and then the Presidential election, not to speak of elections for Senate and House, this session will have a distinct political color.

However, some events are in the offing that promise to be, to say the least, diverting. For one thing, the always stubborn Mr. Truman has already announced that he will resubmit the nomination of Gen. Mark Clark as ambassador to the Vatican. That will be something to see. Some Protestant ministers will be blithely violating the principle of separation of Church and State by an active political campaign. Some politicians will be running for any available cover. And one intriguing possibility is that, given a deadlock, the President may offer a compromise, making Clark a Minister instead of an Ambassador.

Then there is the civil-rights issue, another phrase for justice to the Negro. The undismayed President intends to throw that into the pot again. He has already set up a commission (not nearly so strong as Roosevelt's wartime FEPC) to supervise discrimination in employment on Government defense contracts. That will make another foofaraw.

Then there are always taxes. Mr. Truman can be counted on 1) to ask for more and higher taxes, and 2) to demand that the glaring "loopholes" for evasion in the last tax bill be closed. Congress will furiously attack the Administration for its laxness in collecting the taxes we have, to which the Administration is prepared to retort by citing the Internal Revenue Bureau report that some 197,000 employers are delinquent in their payroll taxes. They have been deducting social-security taxes from pay envelopes and, instead of giving the money to the Treasury, have been using it as working capital. The delinquency amounts to \$96 million. To collect these taxes the Bureau will have to be given more agents.

These are some highlights, easily guessed. Also guessable are continuing inquiries into corruption, and some new ones, notably Agriculture and Alien Property, with the Democrats, as in the last session, doing the investigating.

The State Department may ask for repeal or clarification of an amendment to the Mutual Security Act which has caused us acute and needless embarrassment at the UN Assembly meeting in Paris. This amendment authorized \$100 million for anti-Communists behind the Iron Curtain. Roosevelt handled this much better by having Congress give him the money to do the same job secretly in Germany. But times have changed.

WILFRID PARSONS

## UNDERSCORINGS

Evangelical Lutheranism, which has been the state church of Sweden since 1520, loses part of its legal monopoly under a constitutional amendment that takes provisional effect with the New Year. The old link between Church and State remains, but most of the former legal disabilities affecting non-Lutherans will be removed. After a ban of centuries, Catholics will once more be permitted to open convents and monasteries.

► The UNESCO-sponsored *History of Mankind*, a vast project to produce a new and definitive history for world use, has begun under sorry direction. Chairman of the editorial committee is Dr. Ralph E. Turner, who has been called, according to an NC report, "a dedicated iconoclast who has little mercy either on God or on those who believe in Him." In 1934 Dr. Turner was dismissed from the faculty of the University of Pittsburgh after complaints from students, parents and religious groups that he was flippant and contemptuous towards religion. William F. Buckley Jr., in his much-discussed book *God and Man at Yale* characterizes Dr. Turner, who went to teach at Yale in 1944, as "emphatically and vigorously atheistic."

► Mrs. Caroline J. Putnam, founder and president of Catholic Scholarships for Negroes, Inc., recently told the Hartford, Conn., Catholic Interracial Council that CSN, founded four years ago, is now assisting 75 colored students. Among them are 23 studying to be teachers, 12 doctors, 9 nurses and 4 social workers—"fields where the need is greatest today." Mrs. Putnam, wife of Roger L. Putnam, Economic Stabilization Director, and a direct descendant of Charles Carroll, Catholic signer of the Declaration of Independence, was one of the 1951 recipients of the James J. Hoey Awards for promotion of interracial justice.

► The first native Australian ever to be considered for the honors of the altar is Mother Mary McKillop, foundress of the Sisters of St. Joseph in Australia. Cardinal Gilroy, Archbishop of Sydney, has announced that her cause is progressing well.

► In an address to delegates attending the meeting of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations in Rome, Dr. Harry G. Bennett, chief of the United States Point Four Program, stated that there is enough scientific and technical knowledge available to produce enough food "to feed adequately and well all of the teeming millions of the world." Dr. Bennett, who was killed in a plane crash in Iran, Dec. 22, declared that the fight against hunger can be won by the scientists and technicians in laboratories and experimental stations around the world who are continually adding to knowledge of the production, preservation and distribution of food.

R. V. L.



## Role of the Church for peace

For his 1951 Christmas Message Pope Pius XII spoke about the role of the Catholic Church in promoting world peace, "the great subject which stirs and agitates the human heart" at this dark hour.

In his 1948 Christmas Message, His Holiness had already set forth the moral obligations of *states* themselves to cooperate for peace and international security. The "solidarity of the family of nations," he declared, forbids states "to behave as mere spectators" when any people is threatened with "an unjust aggression, or already its victim." He then roundly condemned a *state* which would assume "an attitude of apathetic neutrality."

The Pope's declaration of last December 24 might seem to conflict with his 1948 address. The reason is that in 1951 he was speaking about the role of the *Church*. The seeming conflict only serves to bring into higher relief the "unique" contribution of the Church to world peace.

### WHAT THE CHURCH CANNOT DO

With "the world split into two opposing camps," the Sovereign Pontiff noted, men are "very loath to concede to anyone any sort of liberty to maintain a position of political neutrality." A careful reading of what follows shows that "political neutrality" has no proper meaning when applied to the role of the Church in the international sphere.

"There can be no question of the Church renouncing her political neutrality" he explained, "for the simple reason she cannot serve temporal interests." He objects to those who would "bring her down to the same level on which conflicting temporal interests are locked in struggle . . . *even where there is question of ends and interests legitimate in themselves*" (emphasis added). The Holy Father, then, did not condemn the kind of political and military alliance which, in his 1948 address, he declared the nations obligated to form. He simply stated that the Church herself, because of her unique role, could never become a party to them because they are *political* devices, arranged for political purposes, whereas she is a *religious* society, seeking spiritual goals. She operates in an order above and beyond states.

The Church should therefore not be called "neutral" in the political sense (he speaks of "her supposed neutrality"), "for any decision of the Church, even in political questions, can never be purely political, but must always be '*sub specie aeternitatis*,' in the light of the divine law, of its order, its values, its standards."

. . . If she passes judgment, that does not mean that she is thereby abandoning a neutrality hitherto observed; for God is never neutral towards human events, in the course of history, and so neither can His Church be.

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The Pope therefore calls the "neutrality of the Church" an "empty phrase." The only sense in which the Church is "politically neutral" is that "the Church does not judge according to purely political norms." She "cannot tie the interests of religion to particular policies of a purely earthly scope." She occupies "the lofty supernatural sphere where political neutrality [in the usual sense] has no meaning . . ."

On the other hand, those who demand that the Church be "neutral" equally misunderstand her divine mission, since she cannot "remain indifferent, even for a single moment, between 'good' and 'evil' in human affairs."

### WHAT THE CHURCH CAN DO

In what way, then, can the Church contribute to world peace? Her "unique" mission, cradled in the manger at Bethlehem, is "to establish peace between each man and God, between men themselves and between peoples." Applied to the world, her mission is *to lay the spiritual and religious foundations of peace in the hearts of men*. Those who cannot see beyond "statistics of military and economic potential" know little about the real source of peace.

The Church ("not a political, but a religious society") has "not merely external" but also "internal and vital relations with states." As a "visible" society, she "meets states in the same territory, embraces in her solicitude the same people, and in many ways and under different aspects makes use of the same means and the same institutions."

The Church meets states on the international as well as on the national level, since states must unite to promote peace:

. . . The indissoluble union of states is demanded by nature. It is a fact which is imposed upon them. And in consent to it, although sometimes hesitantly, they answer the voice of nature. This natural union they strive to embody in an external, stable framework and organization.

Instead of dealing with the question of Church and State in terms of the relationship of the Church to *governments* (the source of endless conflicts and confusions), he defines the "unique" role of the Church in promoting peace in terms of the leavening effect of her teaching on citizens and statesmen:

And how will all this take place except through the continuous, enlightening and strengthening action of the grace of Christ on the minds and hearts of citizens and statesmen, so that in all human relationships they recognize and pursue the purposes of the Creator, that they strive to

enlist the collaboration of individuals and nations for effecting these purposes, that within as well as among nations they practise social justice and charity?

This statement may turn out to be the hinge on which future discussions of the Catholic doctrine on Church-State relations will turn.

#### THE CHRISTIAN ORDER

What the Holy Father calls "a perfect Christian order" (the perfect ordering of human life—familial, economic, social and political) is the "foundation and guarantee of peace." Disarmament alone is an "unstable guarantee of peace, if it is not accompanied by the abolition of the weapons of hate, cupidity and of an overweening lust for prestige."

A Christian order, "since its purpose is peace, is essentially an order of liberty." He calls "true human liberty" the "indispensable element of the social order, considered as the organism of peace." Neither the "free world" nor people whose thinking is dominated by a statist or collectivistic concept of freedom properly understand the Christian concept of liberty, which the Pope himself did not take occasion to unfold at any length.

Pope Pius has compressed a great deal into this address. He has clarified the role of the Church, has given a new direction to the Church-State discussion and brought Christian liberty into focus. We shall further explain these questions in this space.

### Economic outlook

Granted that present world tensions endure, the economic prospect for 1952 can scarcely be called anything but rosy. So long as Government spending ranges between \$70 billion and \$85 billion—it will hit \$70 billion this fiscal year (ending June 30), probably \$80 billion in fiscal 1953—business is bound to be good. That means plenty of jobs at good wages. Since the farm prospect is just as bright, the nation will surely set new records for production and income this year.

That doesn't mean uniformly smooth and sunny sailing. As the percentage of output going to defense rises, there will be a growing number of shortages in civilian goods. Some small businessmen who have been unable to secure defense work may be hurt. Those who manage to find substitutes for scarce critical materials may discover that they are caught in a manpower squeeze. On the other hand, it is unlikely that the current "depression" in soft goods will last as long as next spring. By next fall businessmen now bewailing bulging inventories will likely be scrounging for stocks.

The general prosperity will be constantly menaced, however, by the threat of strikes and of inflation. A great deal of dissatisfaction exists among workers, who are feeling the double pinch of high living costs and high taxes. Without the pressure of all-out war, this dissatisfaction may be hard to control. If it spills over

into long and costly stoppages, the whole defense timetable may be upset and the shaky stabilization program toppled.

Even with such stabilization as we have, it's going to be difficult to keep living costs, and prices in general, from rising another five or six per cent. The full impact of the defense effort has yet to be felt. When the fury of the storm hits, sometime in the summer or fall, the strain will be terrific. Only new taxes and tougher controls over credit and prices can save us. With the same old Congress back in session, and with an election in the offing, none of these precautionary measures is likely to be voted. That is our guess.

### The German bishops' appeal

In an historic document, signed by the Cardinals, archbishops and bishops of Germany, the members of the German hierarchy have sent to the Catholic archbishops and bishops of the United States an "expression of deeply felt gratitude for all the help given to the needy in Germany." The signers note that "more than 7,000 tons of highly valuable food, clothing and medicine and precious raw materials" were sent to Germany last year by American Catholic contributors. They add that the total amount of relief goods sent to Germany through the National Catholic Welfare Conference since 1946 reached a total of 25,000 tons.

The German people will never forget, say the bishops, "the generous reaction of the American people to the difficult and disastrous years between 1945 and 1951." After such great help they dislike to ask for more assistance. But they feel obliged to draw attention to four of their problem groups: some 200,000 displaced persons and German ethnic groups; millions of German expellees from the Eastern Zone vegetating in "appalling mass camps"; the needy population of the eastern, Russian-dominated zone; and, finally, the young and the aged stricken by the various consequences of the war.

The full force of the German bishops' letter will be better understood by recalling the impressive record of private American assistance to Germany from 1945 to the present time. This story was ably summarized in a 141-page report issued by Rev. Edward McSweeney, O.P., shortly before his return to the United States in August, 1951. Father McSweeney was director at Freiburg in Breisgau of the "hard-core" program of the Allied Relief Agencies (CRALOG) and was attached to the American Relief headquarters of the German Catholic welfare organization, Caritas. This assistance program, says Father McSweeney, is "one of the most powerful and patent arguments that the German people as such does not stand condemned in American eyes." In fact, a disproportionately great amount of voluntary aid has been sent from this country to Germany in comparison with some twenty-eight other European countries.

Both CRALOG and CARE have managed to send a steady, though relatively small, flow of goods into

the Russian-occupied territory. CARE has provided a package of food or clothing for one out of every twelve Germans. According to CRALOG, every fifth person in Western Germany has been given some article of clothing contributed through that organization or its member agencies. The German agencies themselves, especially Innere Mission and Hilfswerk (Protestant) and Caritas, have derived great benefit from cooperation with CRALOG and CARE. On our side, the program has "helped safeguard and develop the most noble qualities in American and Christian life." But plenty of work still remains.

The German people, said High Commissioner John J. McCloy in his report to Secretary Acheson on December 12, should shake off the "grave doubts of the good will and intent" of the Western allies. A few days later Mr. McCloy assailed the cynicism and skepticism that he said prevailed among many sections of the German people. Father McSweeney sounded a similar warning to the German authorities that if they put too many obstacles in the path of voluntary assistance for Germany they will have done disservice to their own compatriots. "And to what end? They, too, must periodically appeal to the German voter." On the other hand, according to Father McSweeney, much greater coordination of American policy in Germany and in Washington is called for, now frequently blocked by our own military red tape and procrastination. *Life* magazine, in its December 17 issue, excoriates our country's ungenerous, hostile-seeming policy towards refugees.

Such heartfelt appeals and such grave warnings to Germans and Americans alike should stir us all, on both sides of the ocean, to make 1952 a record year in demolishing the "hard core" of human suffering that still persists within the confines of postwar Germany.

## Minute Women, U. S. A.

The Minute Women of the U. S. A., Inc., founded in Connecticut in September, 1949, believes that "the hand that rocks the cradle is the hand that rules the world." Against every subversive influence, these ladies stand ready to "guard the Land we Love." On joining the organization they agree to pray for divine guidance in order to find light and courage "to fight communism," to demand the "removal of supporters of socialism and communism in the Federal and State governments," "to restore the soundness of our currency" and "to demand efficiency and strict economy in all governmental agencies."

The militant ladies also announce that they believe in States' Rights, and that "the world can't be safe without good women." To make their "crusade" effective, they "pledge in Honor to Vote at Every Election."

To join MW seems easy enough. So long as a person is of the feminine sex, agrees to work for the goals of the organization and is willing to send in two dollars, the privilege of membership is hers,

whether she be a Democrat or a Republican. For the two dollars the members receive a monthly newsletter and a "Lapel Pin in red, white and blue."

According to the president of MW, Suzanne Silvercruys Stevenson, the organization is enjoying an "amazing growth." Even the men have become interested. They are so interested that, according to MW's December Newsletter, Mrs. Stevenson has set up a special Men's Auxiliary. Fathers, husbands and sons of Minute Women are exhorted to join up at once. "I firmly believe," writes Mrs. Stevenson, "these next months will give us a last chance to preserve our American way of life with all the opportunity it used to mean for everyone, and to preserve our Liberties."

Not so surprisingly, MW has been making a good deal of progress in Texas, where the anti-labor Christian Americans started. In fact, it has created such a stir along the Rio Grande that the *Alamo Register*, official organ of the Archdiocese of San Antonio, recently sent an associate editor, Mr. Thomas Pape, to cover a MW organizational meeting and report on his findings. The report appears in the *Alamo Register* for November 30.

It makes interesting reading. The *Register* editor is also in favor of guarding the land we love. He is against communism. He is opposed to socialism. He deplores Government waste. He is just as convinced as MW that women should take an interest in the affairs of government and, above all, should vote and vote intelligently. But he doesn't like the way MW is going about saving the country and interesting women in civic affairs. Before joining the organization, he suggests that women closely examine its program. They will find, as he found, that it contains "much that is condemnable, and which, in fact, has been condemned by the Church."

According to reports reaching this office, the forthright stand of the *Alamo Register* has stirred up some protests. (Mrs. Stevenson is a Catholic.) So far as we can judge, after perusing some MW literature, the protesters haven't a foot to stand on. If they knew any Catholic social teaching at all, they would see that themselves. What has happened to MW is that in opposing socialism and communism the ladies have slipped into a kind of reaction that is perilously close to economic individualism, if, indeed, it isn't identical with it. And the Church has condemned economic individualism, no less than socialism and communism.

That explains why MW equates socialism with the Fair Deal, why it espouses such a retrograde proposal as the 25-per-cent ceiling on personal income taxes, why it favors States' Rights in a context that can only mean opposition to civil-rights legislation, why it pushes a book like Clarence Manion's *The Key to Peace*, why the Federal Government is labeled "the bureaucratic octopus in D.C."

Until MW strives for its excellent goals in a way more in accord with the social teachings of the Church, we suggest that Catholic women devote their time and talent to some other organization.



# Egypt: the aftermath of colonialism

Vincent S. Kearney

IN EARLY 1942 Egyptian shopkeepers suddenly began brushing up on their German. As Field Marshall Erwin Rommel's *Afrika Korps* drew closer to Cairo, one could sense an air of eager anticipation descending over the city like one of Egypt's frequent March-to-October dust storms. In February, 1942, when it became apparent that Egypt's cooperation in the Allied war effort was not as whole-hearted as it might have been, the British Government handed King Farouk an ultimatum and backed it up with a show of military force. Farouk was in no position to do anything but accept it. The British Foreign Office, however, failed to reckon with one far-reaching effect of Britain's peremptory demand on Farouk's loyalty. The ultimatum killed in Egyptian eyes the Anglo-Egyptian Treaty of 1936, which provided for the stationing of a British garrison along the Suez Canal and joint British and Egyptian rule in the Sudan. Never again would Egypt willingly allow British troops to be in a position to interfere with her internal affairs.

It would be a serious mistake, therefore, to write off the current Anglo-Egyptian crisis as simply a consequence of Britain's diplomatic defeat in Iran. Hostility to British occupation and suspicion of British purposes in the Sudan have a seventy-year history. Violent outbursts in protest are a matter of record. The issues today have become somewhat more complicated. Egypt is not merely letting off steam as a result of Britain's weakened international position. If she were, the violence could be expected to simmer down.

The present state of tension is symptomatic of a ferment at work throughout the entire Middle East. A current of resentment has been allowed to run unchecked for so long that it is gradually undermining the hopes envisaged by NATO nations for cooperative association between the West and the Arab world. Though the West optimistically puts its plans for Middle East defense on paper, the cynical Arab is inclined to give them short shrift. He sees no point in waiting around for the dénouement when he thinks he knows the rest of the drama by heart. *Al Misri*, the official organ of Egypt's Wafd party, as quoted in *La Bourse Egyptienne* a year ago, pointed out:

Today the British hold out a project of evacuation in return for tying us to the Empire by a new perpetual treaty. Today the British may bind themselves to what we wish and sign a treaty undertaking to evacuate in one, two or three years. They will do so with a fixed purpose—to gain our support in a world war, which will be declared, no doubt, before the ink of the new

*The great colonial era which is now passing is leaving its heritage of headaches to today's statesmen. Egypt is a case in point. A resurgent nationalism, in violent reaction against the injustices of a past colonialism, creates a situation that could be exploited by the Communists. Father Kearney, of AMERICA's staff, lived in Cairo, 1939-41.*

treaty has dried. Once victorious, the British will go back on their word on the most futile of pretexts.

The Arab is convinced that Western policies of today, which he naturally associates with the British Middle Eastern policies of the past, are not formulated in his interests. Analysis of Anglo-Egyptian tensions, as seen in Arab eyes, helps to explain why.

## THE 1936 TREATY ISSUE

The primary issue between Great Britain and Egypt involves the presence of the British garrison along the Suez Canal. Egypt's demand that they leave implies much more than the mere desire to be rid of occupation troops or an exaggerated idea of Egyptian independence. What rankles is the overweening and domineering British *attitude* toward the situation, as though the British had a superior right to take measures for their own defense in Egypt, whether Egyptians like it or not. The resentment this attitude has fostered cannot be wiped out by the sweep of a pen, as Britain seems to think it can when she proposes as a solution a new treaty, supposedly on a basis of equal partnership between the parties concerned.

British officialdom has not helped any by stressing the argument that Egypt has incurred a "debt" to the West, and to Britain particularly, for her defense in two world wars. Winston Churchill has repeatedly used this line of reasoning. Sir Oliver Franks, British Ambassador to the United States, in an address before the Foreign Policy Association at St. Paul on December 5, undertook to acquaint Americans with the British position in the Anglo-Egyptian quarrel:

It was under the terms of this treaty [of 1936] that Britain at great cost and sacrifice defended Egypt against the assault of Mussolini and Hitler. Egyptians did not actually fight, but on their side willingly provided the facilities which they were called upon to do [i.e., provide] under the treaty.

Such talk serves only to irritate Egyptians. They know, as well as any American schoolboy with an elemental knowledge of the history of World Wars I and II, that when the Allies made a military base of Egypt, the defense of Egyptian interests was not the primary consideration. A real service, if modestly stated and carrying no strings, is usually acknowledged by a sovereign nation. When it is blown up to the proportions of a claim for a *quid pro quo*, as the British tend to do when speaking of their defense of Egypt, the statement becomes hypocritical and only tends to intensify psychological tensions. Furthermore,

it is a moot question whether Egypt "willingly" cooperated with Allied strategy according to the terms of the Treaty of 1936. Military occupation leaves the occupied country in no position to quarrel with the occupying power.

#### FOUR-POWER SUBSTITUTE

If Britain's motives in Egypt have been and are suspect, then so are the motives behind the joint plans of the United States, Britain, France and Turkey to substitute an international defense command in place of the 1936 Treaty. In December, 1950, the usually unemotional *Al Ahram*, the New York Times of the Middle East, posed several questions to the West. On the surface, they seem absurd in view of the strategic importance of the Suez Canal Zone. To the Egyptian mind, however, they are very pertinent.

Why do you not ask Syria to set up a base on her coasts for your garrisons? Why should Turkey not have a strategic base as well? What are you waiting for before putting a garrison near the Persian Gulf? Why should the whole burden of defense of the Middle East fall on us? Why should we be the only ones to be asked to sacrifice our national sovereignty?

Since *Al Ahram's* editorial flourish, Turkey has been assured of early membership in the North Atlantic Treaty Organization. Other Arab League states have at least turned a sympathetic ear to the Four-Power defense proposals for the Middle East. But, as Egyptians conceive the issue, such proposals endanger their survival as an independent, sovereign nation. They interpret them in the light of past experience.

#### SUDAN QUESTION

The question of the Sudan, which lies at the southern boundary of Egypt, is perhaps a secondary issue in the Anglo-Egyptian quarrel. Ever since 1899, Britain and Egypt have jointly ruled this country, the *condominium* having been reaffirmed in the Treaty of 1936. But here again British diplomacy has manifested a certain ineptness irritating to the Egyptians. That the Sudan is essential to the security and water supply of Egypt is a fact to which British statesmen have consistently and unequivocally submitted. Britain has manifested her intention of getting out of this country, but only after a plebiscite in which the Sudanese themselves determine their future.

The British have been somewhat two-faced in handling the problem. Since before the recent blow-up of Anglo-Egyptian relations, they have encouraged certain constitutional developments in the Sudan, aimed at complete Sudanese independence. The Sudanese certainly are justified in claiming the right

of self-determination and of rejecting Egyptian rule. Still, as H. A. R. Gibb, Islamic scholar and Laudian professor of Arabic at Oxford University, remarks in the October, 1951 issue of *International Affairs*:

Granted that a brusque and impulsive policy and a short-sighted propaganda on the part of Egyptian Governments and journals have gravely injured Egyptian interests in the Sudan and have helped to alienate the Sudanese, the repeated professions of British political

leaders that the Sudanese should be free to determine their own future can be justified only if they are accompanied by steady and public efforts to promote a close collaboration and association between Egypt and the Sudan.

This British political circles have failed to do. Therefore British policy is interpreted as an attempt to score off Egypt and pay her back for her attitude toward the 1936 Treaty.

#### ISRAELI QUESTION

One might think that such Anglo-Egyptian differences could be cleared up in a few heart-to-heart talks over a conference table. Perhaps they could, were it not for other factors complicating Anglo-Egyptian relations. Chief of these involve the Israeli question, which has so complicated Arab relations with the West as to compromise any round-table talk before it so much as begins.

The London Times, for example, is generally assumed in the Middle East to be an unofficial mouthpiece of the British Government, a sort of weather-vane indicating which way the wind is blowing in the Foreign Office. In recent months that paper, manifesting a striking disregard of the Arab point of view in regard to the Israeli question, has committed more than one tactless, editorial blunder in expressing its views on Middle Eastern questions.

The Times has consistently repeated hints of possible negotiations between Israel and Jordan. This has served to increase the uneasy mutual suspicions which have threatened to disrupt the Arab League, founded as a result of Egyptian initiative in 1944 to resist Western spheres of influence in the Middle East and the creation of a Jewish state in then overwhelmingly Arab Palestine. The Times has also habitually associated the Anglo-Egyptian question with the passage of tankers through the Suez Canal Zone, prohibited by Egypt since the Palestine war ended in an uneasy armistice.

Aside from the fact that such editorializing manifests a complete misunderstanding of Arab resentment over the establishment of Israel, it has convinced the Arabs that Britain intended from the very first to set up a Jewish state in Palestine in order to weaken them, to break up the unity of the Arab League and



thus assure Western domination in the Middle East. The effect that all this has had on Arab estimates of Western political morality hardly requires unfolding here.

#### WESTERN PURPOSES DISTRUSTED

The British position in Egypt, of course, is that they represent not their own national interests but rather an international interest, in which the United States participates. They claim that in the Sudan their paramount concern is for the Sudanese people. In view of the shaking changes which have taken place in world affairs since World War II, particularly the decline of colonialism, this is perhaps a true statement of present British policy. But the British have failed to get this across to the Egyptian people. Their mismanagement in the past has served to destroy what lingering hopes there might have been on the part of responsible Egyptians to establish friendly relations with Britain. In the political field most Egyptians feel there is no longer a common ground on which to establish such relations. As Mr. Gibb points out in the *International Affairs* article quoted above:

So long as the opposition of Egyptians was motivated by political objectives or even by hatred of the British Government, it was possible to reach, sooner or later, an understanding which would lay the foundations of cooperation. It is so no longer. The new generation simply wishes to be rid of an incubus which has ceased to inspire respect, and all of whose public policies appear in its eyes to be dictated by malevolence toward Egypt.

A general contempt for the record of the so-called democratic leaders in the postwar world is no doubt responsible for this feeling. In Arab eyes Western leaders have become entangled in a web of hypocrisy. For years the nations of the Arab League have sat by as cynical spectators viewing the rivalries of Britain, France and the United States in their area. How could they fail to note that the one issue on which all three have agreed was the partition of Palestine? They have also noted with equal cynicism that the UN has given but passing attention to the plight of the Arab refugees.

Ultimately the present aim of the Western policy towards Egypt and the rest of the Middle East is to build up a stable political and military structure against the growing threat of Russian communism. That communism is the danger factor in the Middle East cannot be denied or overlooked. On the other hand, in view of the West's record in the past, Egyptians and other Middle Easterners cannot be blamed if they suspect that our preoccupation with the "current danger" is nothing more than a defense mechanism contrived to cover up failings arising from ignorance, self-satisfaction and lack of imagination in dealing with Middle Eastern questions.

The near future may prove that sheer desperation has driven the Middle East into the very danger against which we propose to defend it.

## Land fraud in Red China

Albert O'Hara

DURING THE GREAT American controversy over the Chinese Nationalist-Communist question, writers and would-be writers in both good and bad faith were accustomed to silence their opponents by the argument that Chinese Communists were not real Communists but only agrarian reformers, and that even if they were Communists, land reform was so badly needed in China that even anti-Communists ought to wink an eye at whoever brought about the needed social change. The first part of the statement, namely that they were merely agrarian reformers, has been devastatingly discredited by the Chinese Communists themselves. It is still pertinent, however, to inquire whether land reform was so widely necessary as was claimed, and secondly, what has been up till now the aim, practice and effect of land reform in China.

To investigate whether land reform was necessary in China before the advent of the Communists, it will be of little value to consult the statements of newsmen and popular writers on the subject. We should go to the studies of agricultural experts, who give us factual data and trained interpretation of that data. One such study may be found in an article entitled, "Facts and Theories about China's Land," by J. Lossing Buck, which appeared in *Foreign Affairs* for October, 1950. The author is an expert in China's agricultural problems, a scholar who has always enjoyed high standing and respect among agricultural economists in China. His factual surveys are the result of broad scientific studies made in twenty-two provinces of China.

Professor Buck notes the significant fact that there is a farm population of some 1,500 persons per square mile of cultivated land. He adds that the idea of collective farming in China is largely theoretic, praised by some reformers but not advocated by any agriculturalists. In regard to farm mechanization, he says that to put farms in large "cooperative" or "collective" units in order to mechanize agriculture would not alter the fundamental ratio of men to land except for the worse. In regard to redivision of land, Professor Buck observes that it would not change the man-land ratio, but on the contrary would decrease the size of the farms, reduce their economic efficiency and depress the standard of living. More pertinently to our question, Dr. Buck states:

The misinformation about land tenure in China is colossal. For instance, it is said that some 70

Father O'Hara, a Jesuit from California, is on the staff of the China Missionary Bulletin, Hong Kong. He wrote "Archbishop Riberi vs. China's Reds" (AM. 10/13/51).



per cent of the rice crop in Szechwan is paid to the landlords. But the fact is that the Szechwan farmer grows two crops a year . . . The tenant pays no rent on the winter crops . . . the average rental paid was 31.8 of farm receipts.

Moreover, the extent of farm tenancy is usually exaggerated. As Dr. Buck says:

More than one-half of the farmers own all the land they work, approximately one-fourth own some land and rent additional land, and only one-fourth rent all the land they work. In a sample survey of 16,786 farms in 22 provinces in China made by the University of Nanking, 71.3 per cent of all land was worked by farmers owning the land.

A recent news item from the Communist *New China News Agency* for June 29, 1951 says that 40 per cent of the arable land belonged to 20 per cent of the agricultural population, that is, to landlords and rich peasants in Central and Southern China. This confiscated land was turned over to 60 per cent of the farm population, but the beneficiaries obtained only about two *mou* of land or one-third of an acre. These figures, both from earlier surveys and recent Communist admissions, belie the earlier claims of the Communists that 70 to 80 per cent of the land was owned by 10 per cent of the farm population.

It has been charitably assumed by both friend and foe of the Chinese Communist regime that their aims or intentions in "land reform" were only the most honorable, that is, looking only to social justice for the poor peasants. Scarcely anyone questioned their aims. Recently, however, the Chinese Communists themselves are expressing their aims and intentions in land reform in no uncertain terms. Teng Tse-hui, deputy to General Lin Piao of the Central and Southern China Military and Administrative Committee, has given one of the clearest explanations to date of the aim and character of land reform. In a speech of his which was published in the *Yangtze Daily* for December 27, 1950, he stated:

The anti-feudal struggle has its military, political, organizational, intellectual and economic aspects . . . Land reform—confiscation of feudal property and redistribution of land—is the fiercest phase of the struggle, a phase closely coordinated with other manifestations of the struggle. To isolate land reform from this network of struggles and to look upon it simply as a matter of redistribution of land, a technical matter, would be to commit a grave political error.

The speech of Liu Shao-ch'i, Vice President of the Communist Government in China, given on June 14, 1950 and considered to be the classical work on the Agrarian Reform Law, stressed the point that "land reform is a systematic violent struggle." The influence

of these words, which is so much in accord with the dialectic philosophy of communism, was enormous and they are frequently quoted today.

An official report of the East China Land Reform Committee, published in the *Liberation Daily* in Shanghai on March 19, 1950, states quite clearly that the objective of the party in agrarian reform is to use it as a tool for political manipulation of the interests of the party. It naively contends that the farmers realized through this turmoil that the landlords were intimately connected with American imperialism and are now eager to join the fighting in Korea. Although the report admits excesses in the treatment of the landlords by beating or murdering them, by humiliating them, by making them kneel interminably long, by stripping them of their clothes, and by smearing human excrement on their faces, yet it contends that the peasants were basically on the right track.

The usual procedure of land reform starts with military measures against the anti-Communist troops or "bandits." Then follows systematic excitement of the mob to hatred in order to gain a solid minority, at least of the very poor peasants, for the cause of the party. This arousal of the passions of the masses is done by intensive propaganda work, for which the party trains tens of thousands of land-reform agents, and by the reduction of rents, a movement which forces the landlords to pay back previously collected rents of the people. The fanning of hatred is indispensable for the success of the division of land. The actual distribution of land is a culmination of the manifestation of mob passions. After a particularly bloody period of violent accusation-meetings, lynchings and massacres of landlords, the directives to land-reform agents in East China were "to proceed audaciously." Liu Shao-ch'i's words are again quoted to approve land reform as "a systematic violent struggle."

I was personally interested in the end product of this land redistribution, so I hunted up a friend who had lived in North China after the "systematic violent struggle" had had time to simmer down from its full white heat. He said that at first the people were given three *mou* of land if it were rich ground, or four or five if it were poorer, and that on such a plot of ground a family could, by hard work, make a fair living; but then at the end of the year the Government demanded a 30-to 40-per-cent tax, which made it impossible to eke out even a subsistence living from such a piece of land. Many peasants gave up the effort and moved to the cities to try other methods of earning a living or to become beggars.

As for Central China, a friend of mine who recently came from there said that the two or three *mou* of land given to a family could indeed supply a living,



for the land is quite fertile and gives two crops a year. However, the Communists exacted a sixty-per-cent tax, and that on *both* crops. The people groaned that even the Nationalists asked a tax on only one crop a year. Moreover, the tax had to be paid in a specially good grade of grain. In case of failure to pay, the peasant's land was taken away. He was driven out of his house, and all other farmers were forbidden to give the offending family any food or help.

To sum up briefly, communism in China was never mere agrarian reform. Land reform was never the terribly urgent necessity that popular writers have claimed it to be. Its purpose was political, that is, to carry out the Communist dialectic of class struggle so as to consolidate the power of the party. And its effect has been torture and massacre of the landlords and the disillusionment and impoverishment of the peasants. The next step is Communist confiscation of all land and collectivization.

## FEATURE "X"

*"History as it oughta be wrote" is the theme of this engaging discussion of high-school freshman opinion of ancient life and culture. The author teaches in a Catholic academy for girls in the Midwest.*

THE LAST TIME we had Teachers' Institute my angelic high-school history students didn't even try to conceal their sheer joy. Thursday and Friday. No school. *Hurrah!* I said hurrah, too, ladylike, of course, being teacher, but with some spirit, even though I knew that I would be sitting in a hall someplace where a speaker would try to hold my attention and increase my knowledge and tell me how I may, can, might, could, would or should teach somebody something sometime.

Now the girls in my freshman history class have never been to an Institute. And I suspect that all the Institutes in the world wouldn't help me convert them from what they happily are to what they dutifully should be.

Though my girls haven't heard all the aims, the goals, the musts about past, present and future that one hears at an Institute, they *do* know how a history book should be written. In fact, they know several reasons why no history books should be written.

In the first place, say the freshmen, let them be pocket-size. Easy to carry between classes. Easy to hold on buses or when sipping a coke. A few pages only. All necessary history could easily be put into a few pages.

Pictures should be plentiful, but they must be easy to understand at a glance—like posters. And it would save time and energy if printing under pictures were limited to one or two words. Busy freshmen have no time to read small print under them. Nor can they be bothered with footnotes. These are downright distracting and dull. Pictures should also be modern—*stylish*. No pictures of people in old-fashioned clothes. Nor of people with heads and feet turned one way and shoulders and eyes turned another. Like the Egyptians. How could people like *that* ever get pyramids built!

Really, everything about the books should be modern—*up to date*. Who wants to know what people did way back in the long distant past—*fifty* years ago? The Romans? Good heavens, they weren't even civilized; they didn't even have electricity! What did they contribute to civilization? Nothing, really. The book did mention three things—culture or something, the first; the second wasn't important and the third was just a lot of big words.

Suppose the Romans did build bridges and put up a few arches. People build bridges and put up arches all the time. Besides, what good are arches? What we need are youth centers—places that could really be used for something. And there wouldn't need to be a Roman arch or a Greek column in any one of them.

(With the subject matter on the cultural plane nicely taken care of, we now pass on to the political.)

The book tells freshmen: "Internally, Rome as a republic went through many political crises, proceeding from oligarchy to demagogues, to military dictators and finally to emperors."

Which goes to show, they say, that it is useless to study about governments. People couldn't make up their minds. They shouldn't have had oligarchies (whatever they are) or demagogues (whatever they are) or military dictators like Stalin, or emperors like—well—like *emperors*. It's better to have Presidents and have elections every four years so everybody can grow up thinking they can be President even if they won't. And people ruled by queer things called tetrarchies or areopaguses would be just bound to revolt, which is probably the cause of so many wars and things. They would just naturally not want an areopagus hanging over their heads.

And maps, too, are a waste of paper. Practically. No two of them are alike. A person finds out where some country is and then in the very next map has to look for it all over again. It has moved or disappeared entirely. Or maybe it is colored blue when it should be yellow like it was on the map before. Therefore it would be better to leave them out. If countries *have* to be carved out into queer shapes, why can't they be a little bit sensible about it? Like Italy, for instance. A boot isn't exactly pretty, maybe, but it is sensible and can be found with little fuss. With maps changing on every page, no wonder a person would think the Greeks lived in Egypt near what was called Spain and is now Russia.

And *everybody* knows that dates are superfluous. Everybody *already* knows all the important ones—like Columbus discovering America—and there is no use for others. Who ever heard of someone walking up to a person on the street and asking a person “When did Euclid live?”

Furthermore, proper names should be shortened and simplified. Names like Murphy or Jones and plenty of other short, easy ones would be all right. But not those long, hard ones. Very often names could be omitted entirely. Just say “they” or “someone” or “a man high in authority” or maybe “the king.” What matter *which* king? They’re all dead now anyway, practically, so it couldn’t make any particular difference to him or his family. If absolutely necessary, his name could be found in a *Who’s Who*.

Take Aeschylus. How could a loving mother give such a name to her child? Sophocles. Euripides. No wonder they wrote tragedies. It must have been tragedy for them just to sign their names. And whatever it was they wrote, it must have been in Greek or something, so a person couldn’t read it anyway. So—why mention them at all? Big words like “ziggyrats” or “upanishads” might be all right if Webster would cooperate. But Webster works on the principle that one long word deserves another; therefore, any self-respecting and time-saving freshman ignores both big words and Webster.

And histories are too serious. Having everything so serious and everything makes a person feel so serious

and everything. Didn’t anybody ever crack a joke in those old days? Can’t a history be comical? . . .

Sometimes, in my best school mood, I see my wriggly freshmen angels (less than a thousand years hence) turned into eminent archeologists, writers of books and professors of history. I see them mothers of future freshmen who will send their girls off to school saying (I hope): “. . . but, dear, I know you will just love history if . . .”

I can’t even dream up the remedy she might have for them *then*. But I do have a good idea what my freshmen would say right now. “To love history, have nothing to do with the stuff.”

Ah, yes. Institute programs have my respectful cooperation. I applaud. I examine my conscience. I firmly resolve. All in due time and in due order. I accept the humanistic traditional approach and I accept the startlingly new. All this is easy.

But there come the Mondays and the Tuesdays—and the freshmen in history classes who never attend Institutes and never examine their consciences nor firmly resolve. All *they* want is a small, sensible, easy, brief, interesting, comical text book. Better still, no book at all. They would like some good soul to invent a nice gadget with buttons to push, and out would come history figures and facts. Not *written* figures and facts. Nothing so old-fashioned. Let them be like singing commercials! *You know—interesting . . . sensible . . .* Ho hum. Where’s my Institute zeal?

MAUREEN FLYNN

## Ghosts in the wings

Richard A. McCormick

The year 1881 was the year of Ibsen’s *Ghosts*. The war of words that ensued was impassioned, bitter; one had to be an Ibsenite or an anti-Ibsenite. Neutrality was impossible where issues cut so sharply into the everyday, not to say intimate, life of men. The lackluster, bespectacled Norwegian, the image of a village schoolmaster, was reviled as “naughty, criminal, disgusting, perverted,” after *Ghosts* had played its first night in England. But the air soon cleared, men and women went their way, the theatres continued to operate, Ibsen passed away, and *Ghosts* became a revival piece.

The ghosts which Ibsen feared were lurking in domestic closets—“all sorts of old dead ideas and all kinds of old dead beliefs”—had turned out to be, all too often, shadows playing on the wall, most of which the Norwegian had himself cast there. A little light (for those who read by light!) has dispelled them. But that huge group of ghost-forces, nineteenth-century thought, to which Ibsen unwittingly gave a revitalized dramatic medium, darkened the already gloomy fjord atmosphere of Ibsen’s work and has

## LITERATURE AND ARTS

been haunting the theatre from his day to our own. With the contemporary theatre still the dark and uncertain thing it is, it might prove helpful to the reader of plays and the theatre-goer to waylay a ghost or two which swept the boards of the earlier modern stage—before they waylay him.

These ghosts still creep about, if not in the full floodlight of the theatre itself, certainly in the more congenial shadows of the twentieth-century scriptoria. Even a casual reading of modern (from 1880 on) dramatic works will uncloset a few, the spookiest of which are likely to turn out to be Comte, Darwin, Marx, Zola.

As far back as the 1840’s, Comte was envisaging a systematic unification of all known truth on the basis



of the scientific method. His scientism stumbled even into the field of politics, morals and social problems. He liked to be called the first sociologist. It was largely through Comte that the scientific method achieved the primacy it did in the early nineteenth century and paved the way for one of the theatre's most persistent ghosts, Charles Darwin.

Darwin, working with the data he had gleaned from Lamarck and from Malthus' *Essay on Population*, argued the variation of species through a process of natural selection which is known popularly as the survival of the fittest. The European Darwinist popularizers—Spencer, Tyndall, Huxley—the last of whom called himself the first “agnostic”—drew from Darwinism what they considered its corollaries: the meaninglessness of the supernatural, the obsolescence of the notion of providence, the solidification of mechanical materialism.

When Karl Marx reduced social life (in 1859, coincidentally the same year as the publication of the *Origin of Species*) to the Hegelian dialectic and Darwinian struggle for survival and demanded an onslaught of the proletariat on the capitalist, the cycle was complete. Scientific materialism was in the ascendancy; but so was a new social-mindedness and class consciousness. These three elements, the scientific method, struggle for survival, and class consciousness all but dominate the early continental and English drama.

Comte, Darwin, Marx—a formidable group of ghosts. Nor are we seeing shadows. Anyone who suspects that the cavortings of these three could have reached the ears of the many only with the greatest difficulty, has but to reflect that not so long ago (*Time*, June 4, 1951) Dr. Mortimer Adler threw college campuses into a furor by the mere restatement of a Darwinian question.

Actually the impact of Comte, Darwin, and Marx on the theatre of 1880 was tremendous. Because of the work of these three, there grew the feeling that men act more or less in harmony with their environment, that the free and self-originating element in human action is small. Zola stated this clearly in his preface to *Thérèse Raquin* and grouped about himself dramatists interested in propounding the idea. Holz carried the idea to Germany. Both men, of course, were intimately connected with the theatre, Zola's ideas getting good billing at Antoine's Théâtre Libre in France and Holz in the work of Gerhart Hauptmann. The naturalistic theatre grew out of this heredity-environment approach to character; and the pivotal position of the naturalistic theatre in the formation of the more contemporary drama is beyond question.

Once the Zolaists had consigned free will to the stone heap, they felt they could treat men with a new clinical probity. The greatest single effect of such a philosophy was the undermining of the idea of guilt. Traditionally the characters of the great playwrights of yore had been at odds with an immutable moral law and thus incurred tragic guilt. The great men

and women of Sophocles, Aeschylus, Shakespeare, Marlowe learned what it meant to transgress the law written in the hearts of men. Strong characters, they had risen in defiance, out of passion, had fallen and paid with their doom. The pleasure which accompanied the traditional tragedy was the calm of expiation, of security in the possession of common moral principles, of the vindicated moral order.

But when pseudo-scientism had done away with free will in the nineteenth century, the bottom fell out of the idea of guilt, as Mr. Ludwig Lewisohn has pointed out. The brown taste, the nausea, the character dissolution in the world seemed no longer the wages of sin but of some inexplicable disharmony between man and his world. The old inner certainties—law, imputability, sin—had been toppled. In their place came externality: heredity and environment. What man did was no longer of importance; what he suffered was.

This great shift in fundamental thinking could be laid at the feet of Comte, Darwin and Marx. That it got into the theatre was, after Ibsen, the work of Zola, Holz and a few others like Antoine, Otto Braham, George Moore.

These ghosts of the modern theatre haunt every country where drama has flourished. They seem to haunt everyone from Strindberg to O'Neill. Even the most cursory reading of Strindberg's *The Father* and *Miss Julia* will convince one that the violent Swede had read his Darwin carefully and succumbed to the idea that love is a battle for survival and superiority. The meek Chekhov produces the pattern of the almost dialectically necessary march of progress in his *Cherry Orchard* and the inroads it has made on human life in *The Three Sisters*. Hauptmann's *Weavers*, a newsreel of pathetic suffering, presents a series of vignettes where the mob bleeds and starves as it takes social justice into its own hands. One will perceive that through the twilight Venetian glow which tones and mellows Schnitzler's work (for example, *The Lonely Way*) there is a crude nihilism: happiness is universally elusive, to be found neither in yielding to nor in restraining one's “illusions.”

The early French sociologists, Hervieu and Brieux, present a picture of corruption (*The Red Robe*) and suffering (*Know Thyself*) where human misery emerges as the plaything of passion and greed. And on down the list of greats, through Synge (*Riders to the Sea*) and O'Casey (*Juno and the Paycock*) whose naturalism is rich but in whose hands human action is practically synonymous with human suffering. The bleak reality in Galsworthy's *Strife*, *The Mob* and *The Silver Box* is sufficient to show the same forces at work.

Henry Arthur Jones freely admitted that he was an “inflexible determinist” who based his entire philosophy on the structure of the nervous system. Ironically enough, the slight success he enjoyed in the theatre in works like *Michael and His Lost Angel* was born of a concession to this principle. Even the delightful but elusive realist J. M. Barrie found it necessary to

slip "islands" into his works to get to the heart of things, so thickly rutted did he find his characters in environmental patterns. As for Bernard Shaw, he would probably have insisted on some kind of voluntarism; but in many of his works the will gets lost on G. B. S.'s intellectual binges (*Man and Superman*) or staggers in somewhat ludicrously to save the situation (*Candida*).

The American theatre is quite as haunted as every other. For years Eugene O'Neill has been heaping the most appalling tragedies on characters which often enough begin as fresh, healthy, appealing young things (*Beyond the Horizon*, *Strange Interlude*). He is concerned with suffering. But one wonders if he has not become a veterinarian in the process. On his crumbling farms, in his stokeholes (*The Hairy Ape*) and dives (*The Iceman Cometh*), the suspicion of imputability is gone as rapidly as the last drink. In their own way, Anderson and Odets plus a score of lesser contemporaries worry more about suffering than doing.

The upshot of it all is not that a deterministic attitude toward suffering makes bad drama. It makes no drama. For in no other literary or artistic medium is

the clear struggle between good and evil, will and object, so immediately and necessarily the stuff of the artist. Drama is essentially conflict. When the clear conflict fades into the polite rustle of what is pleasant with what is unpleasant, convenient with inconvenient, or worse still, when the struggle with passion and pain and sin becomes utterly onesided, pre-decided, we have the anomaly of the undramatic drama. Most significantly, we have drama, if it is that, which is untrue to life. For in real life, there is law, there is sin, there is responsibility; there is in real life a difference between human and merely animal suffering. Animal suffering cannot strictly be deserved, nor strictly accepted, nor intelligently resisted, nor consecrated. The difference is the intelligent human soul with the power of free will.

But for Ibsen, the ghosts of the nineteenth century might never have been unloosed in the theatre. But his technical excellence, his powerful originality won for the theatre a new lease on life and new respect in the days when Scribe and Sardou and their likes were the darlings of the stage.

Next time you see a play, look for a ghost or two.

### Liberty or peace

#### A FOREIGN POLICY FOR AMERICANS

By Robert A. Taft. Doubleday. 127p. \$2

It might be expected that one of the most powerful figures in the U. S. Senate would have much to contribute toward critical and constructive thinking on American foreign policy. But the Hon. Senator is disappointing as a critic and fails to formulate a convincing new departure in policy. The book mainly concerns itself with omniscient hindsight criticism of current policy, plus a lawyer's penchant for obscuring involved issues of international politics by intruding perplexing constitutional and international legal questions. Mr. Taft, lacking in prudence when confronted with a grave national peril, prefers to make foreign policy the issue in the coming presidential campaign.

Disregarding the necessity for sound and general principles, the Senator puts forth a particular policy to cope with the Russian menace which is no improvement on the present policy. The objections leveled against the UN, NATO and the executive power—sending armed forces abroad and diplomacy by executive agreements—betray hostility toward America's complete participation in the international effort to avoid World War III. He thinks the domestic cost—controls (liberty), taxation, loans and debts—is too high. This brochure

is indeed largely a surreptitious plea for a re-aligned domestic policy, constituting a politician's efforts to sway the broadest and most diverse elements of discontent.

The tyro statesman of over ten years ago has regressed to an artful and captious politician. A *Foreign Policy for Americans* would make a sorry state paper. Taft's restrictive views on the executive power show he is not above dissimulation and misrepresentation. Casually referring to the elder Taft's views on the subject with an amazing *tour de force*, he writes, "I think he leaned toward the power of the Executive."

This book stands on an essentially false premise, representing basically the fatal error of all isolationists and reactionary proponents of international power politics—would Taft forget our modern War Hawks? He asserts that the maintenance of liberty is the prime concern of American foreign policy. Is the Senator resorting to a time-honored but ignoble device of demagoguery which is meaningless in this context but powerful as propaganda?

Not all American wars were fought in defense of liberty. The prime purpose of our foreign policy is peace. Most American presidents have thought so. The U. S. and cosignatories of the UN Charter confirmed this purpose. The American people want peace, not a Senator's confession of incompetence to gain it. The traditional goal of peace is deeply rooted in our Christian heritage. The celebrated Augustinian doctrine of "universal peace"—prominent in the state

## BOOKS

papers of William Howard Taft—has been restated by every competent teacher and statesman from time immemorial.

Now that Gandhi is dead, only two world figures faithfully and sincerely advocate this sane and sound policy—Pope Pius XII and President Truman. This book does little to discourage the conclusion that the Senator is unable to measure up to the great heights of this noble Christian ideal.

MATTHEW M. McMAHON

### Ambition sublimated

#### FATHER LUIGI GENTILI AND HIS MISSION (1801-1848)

By Denis Gwynn. Clonmore and Reynolds, Dublin. 271p. 16/-.

Students of the Catholic revival in England will welcome this book, the first English biography in a century of the fabulous Father Gentili, whose name keeps bobbing up in any history of the Second Spring.

Luigi Gentili, born in Rome in 1801, was a very bright and ambitious young man, a better-than-average Catholic, but no priest from the cradle. He attacked life with fury, determined to be somebody. By twenty, he was a distinguished lawyer. By twenty-five, he

had forced himself to the top of Roman society, noted as a linguist and musician. He even picked up a couple of fairly synthetic titles. And there is a genuine Hollywood touch. Rejected in love, Gentili took to theology and the works of mercy with such violence that his health broke, and his plan to join the Jesuits had to be abandoned. Then he met Antonio Rosmini, became one of the first members of the Institute of Charity, and was ordained at the age of twenty-nine.

Most of his priestly life was spent in England, where his spiritual influence touched nearly everybody and everything, bringing warmth and flowering to the suspicious little world of the old Catholics. He taught school, preached indefatigably in towns and villages, made hundreds of converts and finally, in the public missions he preached to the poor in the great cities, found his major apostolic work. He died at forty-seven, of overwork and cholera.

The Irish, who loved him, buried him in the sacred space, reserved for Ireland's heroes, near O'Connell's new tomb in Glasnevin cemetery. Denis Gwynn, the Irish authority on the Catholic revival, says of his subject: "I know of no other life which conveys so complete a picture of the various and often conflicting factors in the Catholic life of England during that period of sudden expansion and overwhelming difficulty." (pp. 9-10).

If there is a flaw in the book, it is perhaps that there is too much Second Spring and too little Gentili in the later chapters. The indefatigable and holy priest is so fascinating that we want to know more about him as an individual, particularly as an example of deep spirituality. Denis Gwynn, despite this reservation, has produced an admirable book, which deserves very wide circulation.

RICHARD V. LAWLOR, S.J.

## Our defense economy

### THE ECONOMICS OF MOBILIZATION AND INFLATION

By Seymour E. Harris. Norton. 307p. \$4.50

Seymour Harris, Professor of Economics at Harvard University, has written an economic analysis of the defense economy. He brings an impressive list of qualifications to the task. He notes in his preface that this is his twenty-fourth book—his tenth dealing with problems of war economics and finance. Professor Harris has also had considerable government experience, having served as head of the Office of Export-Import during OPA days and currently as consultant to the President's Council of Economic Advisers.

Professor Harris declares that he has written this book because our experience during the last war is a dubious guide for economic policy during the current defense program. He points out that the wartime economy followed a period of prolonged deflation when abundant unemployed resources were available. The present defense program is being piled on an economy which has experienced inflation for ten years. The inflationary influences, originating in the war, he declares, had not yet been fully absorbed before the economy was exposed to the new inflationary pressures arising out of the defense program. This, he argues, means that the system of controls appropriate for World War II cannot be applied indiscriminately to the current defense economy.

Despite the soundness of Professor Harris' basic idea, the book is disappointing. It gives evidence of hasty preparation. There are, for example, a number of typographical er-

rors which are confusing to the reader. The material, although much of it is good, is not well organized. The author, possibly because conditions were changing so rapidly during the preparation of the book, at one point seems to contradict himself within a space of four pages. He seems to favor, for example, restricting price controls to essentials on page 200, while, on page 204, he argues that a price-control system, to be effective, must be comprehensive. More careful editing would have eliminated these annoying defects.

There is little that is novel in the discussion of policies designed to contain inflation and divert manpower and resources to defense production. Professor Harris emphasizes the importance of indirect, that is fiscal policy and monetary management, as compared with direct controls. He argues that direct controls during World War II were less successful than they appeared at that time. Inflation during the war, he writes, was suppressed. When controls were removed after the war, the pent-up forces produced the post-war inflation. Increased taxation and better control over many supplies, he argues, prevent these forces from building up.

Perhaps the basic defect of the book is a confusion in the kind of defense program which this country faces. There is a limited program, such as the present, which requires a \$50 billion a year increase in defense spending—lifting government expenditures to about 20 per cent of national income. An all-out program, on the other hand, would lift defense expenditures to 40 or 50 per cent of national income.

The two programs would call for entirely different sets of policy decisions. While Professor Harris is aware of this and does, in fact, suggest different policies, there is considerable confusion in the discussion—at least for the reviewer. The reader, and perhaps Professor Harris himself, is not altogether clear at times as to the dimensions of the program under discussion.

Although the book is marred by its hasty preparation, the general reader will find the basic elements and difficulties of the defense economy adequately explained. There are, moreover, some interesting tables in which the factors which cause inflation or impede mobilization are forcefully presented. For the reviewer the most interesting chapter was on the impact of inflation on institutions of higher learning. While this discussion was more in the nature of an aside, it contained much fresh interesting material.

CHARLES J. WALSH

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## TRACY'S TIGER

By William Saroyan. Doubleday. 143p. \$2.50

From conversations with various acquaintances I would gather that people either like Saroyan or want no part of him. Personally I like Saroyan. In fact Saroyan writes so simply that it is hard not to like him. His philosophy is remarkably uncomplicated; he believes that if everyone would love everyone else there would be no trouble in the world. This is so obviously true that people object to it on that basis alone. On the other hand Saroyan knows people, real people, not "novel" people.

*Tracy's Tiger* is an excellent case in point. Saroyan's characters do the things most of us would like to do and think the thoughts most of us think. The story is brief and tissue-thin. Tracy comes to New York from San Francisco, gets a job in a New York coffee importing house, falls in love, has a misunderstanding, returns to San Francisco, comes back again to New York, finds his girl and they go off together. That's all—except for Tracy's tiger. As a boy Tracy adopted a mythical tiger who is his constant companion. Tracy talks to the tiger and from the tiger's reactions makes his own decisions. No one knows about this tiger until on his return to New York Tracy is seen walking along the street with a real tiger which Tracy doesn't notice because he has always had a tiger with him—incidentally the tiger is a black panther—and his imaginary tiger had long ago become a reality.

Needless to say the police and the general public do not take the same view toward tiger-panthers that Tracy does. So complications set in and Tracy winds up in Bellevue but not before one of the most amusing scenes I have ever read. Saroyan's portrayal of a couple of psychiatrists is without equal. Don't miss this.

JAMES BERNARD KELLEY

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THOMAS H. D. MAHONEY, author of *U. S. in World Affairs*, is in the history department at M. I. T.

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"For we have seen His star in the east" (Matthew 2:2, gospel of the Feast of Epiphany).

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Babylon. Here we were in the original city of the Magi. Some of our Chaldean Catholic high-school boys who laughed and shouted as they pushed their way out of the bus may well have been descended from "Shereser the Rab Mag (The chief Magus) and the other princes of the king of Babylon" whom Jeremias mentions (39:3).

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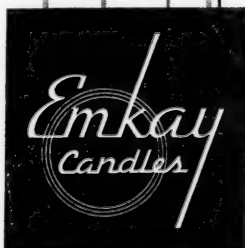
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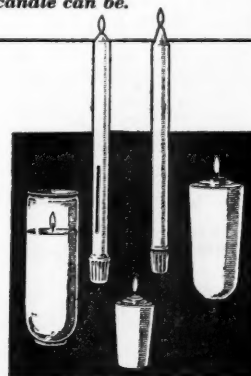
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voted as they were to science, they also knew its limitations. Though they held positions of power and honor, they were humble men of good will searching for the truth. Night after night as they scanned the cloudless Babylonian skies in order to extend the frontiers of human knowledge, they raised their minds and hearts to the Author of so much beauty and power. Such men God does not suffer to be ever searching, searching and never finding truth. When Truth itself came down to earth and became the Incarnate Word, God called to the Magi to come and share in the divine revelation.

St. Ignatius in the *Spiritual Exercises* tells us that we ought to take the visit of the Magi to the Cave of Bethlehem as the subject of *contemplation*. That is, according to his method of prayer, we ought to represent ourselves in imagination as actually present at the scene. We consider for a moment the history and setting of the event. Then we observe the persons, listen to their words and witness their actions. Then we reflect on the meaning and application of the event in our daily lives. A beautiful model for contemplative prayer of this sort is to be found in an Epiphany hymn of St. Ephraem, who was born in that same land in the early fourth century.

The hymn is entitled "Mary and the Magi" (for a translation see the December *Catholic Mind*). After a brief prolog giving the history and setting, a dialog follows, in which we hear the words which St. Ephraem imagines to have passed between "the princes of Persia" and the mother of the Child.

Mary begins by asking the Magi why they have come with their gifts for the Child. They answer that He is the King to whom the whole world is subject. Mary then puts them to the test. How can a king come from so poor a home? How can a king be so humble? So tiny? So lacking in armed forces? So young?

The Magi insist that they have made no mistake. The star that guided them could not err. "In the light we walked, and the King is thy Son!" Poverty? "Thy Son is the great Treasure." Humility? He shall be exalted. "The armed forces of thy Son are above. They ride through the heights scattering fiery rays, and one of them it was that came and called us." Mary, seeing that they have truly been called by God, reveals to them the mystery of the Virgin Birth and the message of the angel Gabriel. Then she bids them go back to their lands as apostles of peace and of truth. "And when the Kingdom of my Son shall arise, may He place His standard in your territory." JOHN J. SCANLON, S.J.

## THEATRE

POINT OF NO RETURN, even if it were barren of other ingratiating qualities, in at least one respect would be a notable and unique contribution to the current season. There is no infidelity, seduction or any other expression of illicit passion in the story, nor any roué, fancy woman or philanderer among the characters. Paul Osborn, who adapted the play from John P. Marquand's novel of the same title, naively assumes that sex conflict is not the sole source of dramatic material, and the long queues extending down the street from the Alvin box office indicate that his discovery may prove as profitable as it is, in our days, original.

Mr. Osborn's leading character is not an individual, but a family, publicly represented by Charles Gray, actually governed by Nancy Gray, his wife. The Grays are a proper family in the junior executive set. They wear the right clothes, live in the right suburb, belong to the right club and can afford to buy their kids the right Hopalong Cassidy outfits. They have achieved moderate success and reasonable security. But the mores of their set, resembling the taboos of primitive peoples, impose upon them an obligation to improve their position by moving up to a higher social level.

There is a vice-presidency vacant in the bank where Charles is employed, and he feels that he deserves the promotion. Nancy shares his feeling and, furthermore, she is determined that he should make every effort to get the job. Her determination forces Charles to make a decision. While deciding, he looks back over the years to other decisive moments of his life.

In retrospect, it seems that all his important decisions were not personal choices but responses to outside pressure. He had rarely done what he wanted to do, or what he thought was best or right, only what other people or the community expected or provoked him to do. His life had been spent in trucking, curving and polishing other people's apples; always, of course, with proper outward dignity. Now, his associates and closest rival and, more important, his wife, expect him to play office politics for the vacant vice-presidency.

For a moment, he rebels. He quickly discovers, however, that his habits and social reflexes have been so indelibly impressed in his character that it is impossible to erase them. He has been

climbing toward success in a crawling position so long that he has practically lost the ability to stand upright. In a gesture of resignation, he invites his boss to dinner.

Henry Fonda, starred in the production, surpasses his excellent performance in *Mr. Roberts* and his sensitive portrayal of Hollywood's *Young Lincoln*. Those were relatively simple portrayals of characters who came to grips with tangible opposition. *Point of No Return*, constructed in the style of comedy, is a drama of impalpables coming to a crisis in the mind of the central character. Charles Gray is a complex character, a reflective and self-critical man, and Mr. Fonda interprets him beautifully, humorously and triumphantly.

Leora Dana, an affectionate suburban wife and competent mother, is next door to perfect in her role. Frank Conroy, the vice-president-maker, is smooth as the boss banker. All other roles are handled with skill deserving featured billing in the future.

H. C. Potter, who directed, and Jo Mielziner, who designed the sets, apparently worked as a team in synchronizing the action and background with the mood of the Marquand-Osborn story. Mainbocher saw to it that the characters were dressed just right for their roles. Leland Hayward is the producer who can thank his stars for Henry Fonda.

THEOPHILUS LEWIS

## FILMS

ELOPEMENT is a sometimes appealing but badly focused comedy. A young professor (William Lundigan) and a star college pupil (Anne Francis) "discover" one another on the evening of her graduation and decide to elope. Their respective parents, Charles Bickford and Evelyn Varden, Clifton Webb and Margalo Gilmore, join forces to pursue the pair. In the course of a rather hectic chase the mutual antipathy of the two older couples is gradually dissipated, while the youthful objects of the chase awaken independently if somewhat belatedly to the irresponsibility of their decision.

The picture makes a number of wry and perceptive observations on the perversity of human nature but they do not fuse into a unified whole. Neither Clifton Webb's brittle style nor the madcap elopement fits comfortably into the prevailing atmosphere of lifelike, sentimental comedy, with

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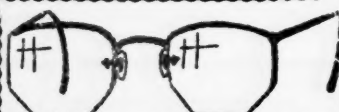


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the result that Webb's comic talents are largely unexploited, while the film's generally wholesome outlook on life never seems quite genuine. None the less it should provide adults with a few unusually pleasant moments.  
(20th Century-Fox)

I WANT YOU is another of Samuel Goldwyn's ingratiating professions of faith in the American people, chronicling on a much smaller canvas the present-day reverse parallel to *The Best Years of Our Lives*. The picture is concerned with the effects of the war in Korea and the remobilization program on a small group of people in a typical Midwestern city. Among its villainless cast of characters are: a World War II veteran (Dana Andrews) and his wife (Dorothy McGuire), his good-hearted braggart father (Robert Keith) and his long-suffering mother (Mildred Dunnock), his draft-age brother (Farley Granger), the brother's sweetheart (Peggy Dow).

While Goldwyn's conception of typical American family life is somewhat slick and superficial and he appears to share the fanciful romantic notion that getting married is a panacea for the problems of young love in wartime, most of the incidents ring warm and true. As written with humor as well as pathos by Irwin Shaw, directed with striking naturalness by Mark Robson and acted by a skillful and likable cast, the picture comes close enough to being a valid drama about nice people to be a welcome change for adults. (RKO)

DISTANT DRUMS comes up with a new setting for the tried and true Indian warfare epic. The scene is the Florida Everglades in the days of Andrew Jackson's campaign against the Seminole Indians and the action has been photographed to very good effect in the original locale. By way of plot the picture describes a commando-type expedition across Lake Okeechobee to destroy the Indians' fortress supply-base followed by a perilous forced march back through the swamps with Seminoles and alligators in hot pursuit. Considering the freshness and inherent excitement of its background, the film has surprisingly little originality or stature. Its adherence to formula even includes the inescapable amorous cliché of third-rate historical fiction—a romance between a blatantly shapely good-bad girl (Mari Aldon) and the expedition's inevitable intrepid and taciturn commander (Gary Cooper). Adult adventure fans, however, will cotton to it. (Warner)

MOIRA WALSH

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